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ALTERNATIVE PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN CONCEPTS

JUNE 1970

CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH, CALIFORNIA

GENERAL PLAN PROGRAM

DMJM

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3325 WILSHIRE BLVD. · LOS ANGELES, CALIF. 90005 · AREA CODE 213 381-3663

PLANNING § ARCHITECTURE § ENGINEERING § SYSTEMS § ECONOMICS

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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide the major transition between the research and analysis which has been prepared thus far, and the ultimate physical solution for the Laguna Beach General Plan. It is an attempt to indicate the range of possibilities which have been explored, together with a demonstration of the thinking process which has guided the design.

The format here is essentially presented as a visual analysis. It represents a translation and synthesis of the research, goals, assumptions, and constraints identified in the planning program.

Five major form concepts are presented. These have been used as a basis for developing the General Plan Concept. The work contained herein is somewhat generalized as to precise detail. Refinement will come in the next stages of plan development.

II. BACKGROUND

In recent months, Southern California has awakened to the fact that man is destroying his environment through overpopulation and overconcentration. Many communities have begun to consider the consequences of uncontrolled growth and the possibility that any natural environment has a human saturation point beyond which further congestion, even if planned, is not socially desirable. Although present zoning would allow a 5-fold population increase within the city boundary of Laguna Beach, the recommended limit is approximately twice the existing population figure.

Once these self-imposed, outer limits of city growth have been met, however, internal change will and must continue. It is with this condition in mind that various city form possibilities have been explored even though the resident population may not increase greatly by the year 1990.

Each concept has a theoretical population limit and the boundaries between the man-made and natural environment should be considered fixed. Additional growth, whether permanent or seasonal, should be accommodated at the expense of increased densities, within the designated human reserves, and not a decrease in open space.

Development in Laguna Beach has basically occurred on two horizontal planes, vertically separated by 500 feet. As the demand for additional

residential space has increased, the saturated shelf and hilltop areas have begun to expand upward and downward, extending urban tentacles along the slopes of Laguna's canyons. These concepts attempt to explore future growth characteristics aimed at preventing the inevitable merging of these shelf and hilltop tentacles. Each concept requires a restructuring of existing conditions. Some proposals are drastic, some subtle, some reflect an increase in population and/or tourism, and some assume a stable population but changing city form.

III. EXISTING FORM ANALYSIS

Prior to exploring alternate General Plan concepts, an investigation was made of various physical characteristics of the City of Laguna Beach which should be partially instrumental in determining the spatial relationships of various city form elements. Existing physical constraints include topography, slope analysis, urban growth, vehicular circulation network and geological conditions.

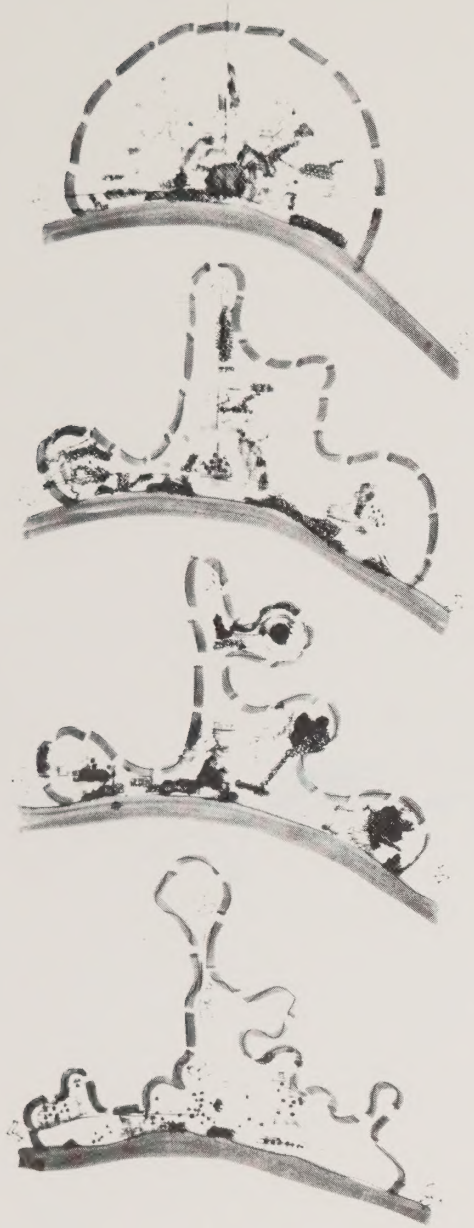

FIGURE 1. CITY FORM INVESTIGATION

FIGURE 2. CITY FORM INVESTIGATION

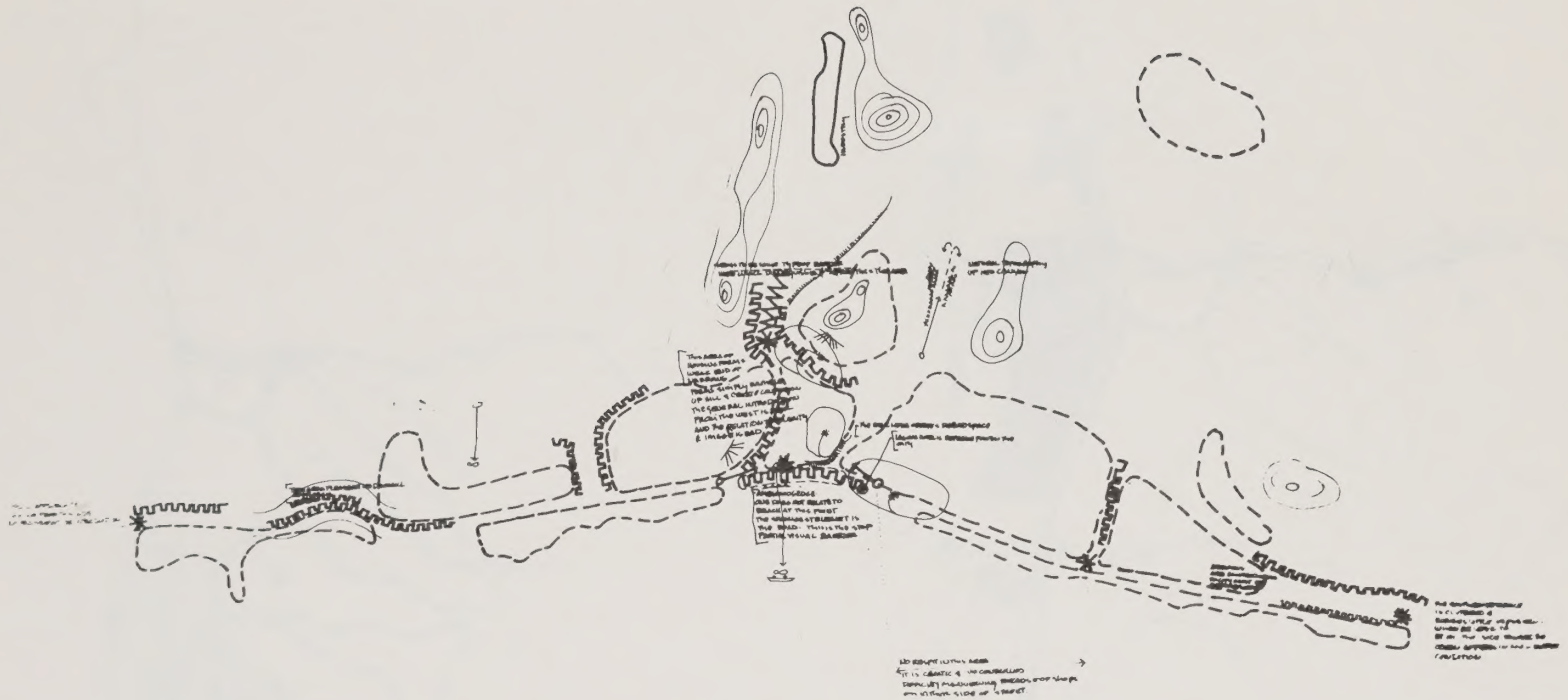

FIGURE 3. FORM INDICATORS

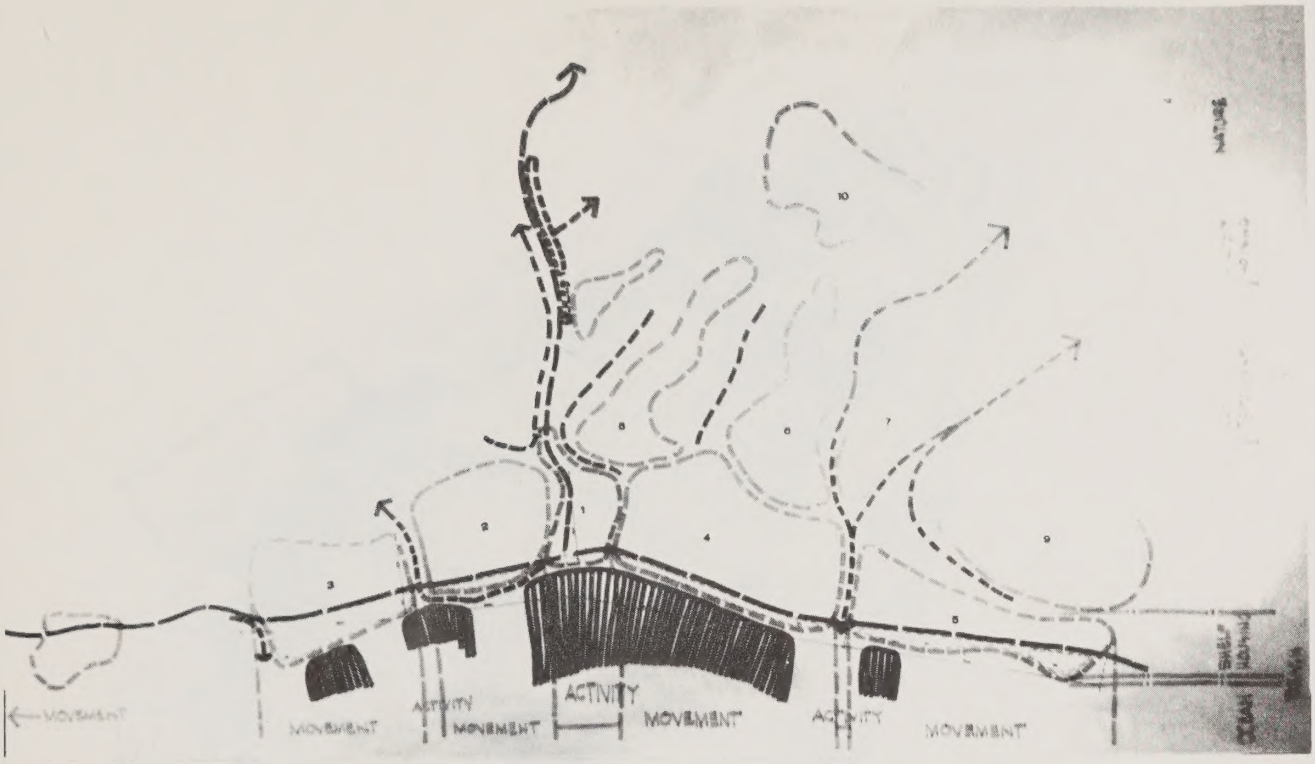

FIGURE 4. PLANNING UNITS

FIGURE 5. PLANNING UNITS

FIGURE 6. LAGUNA BEACH LAND FORMS

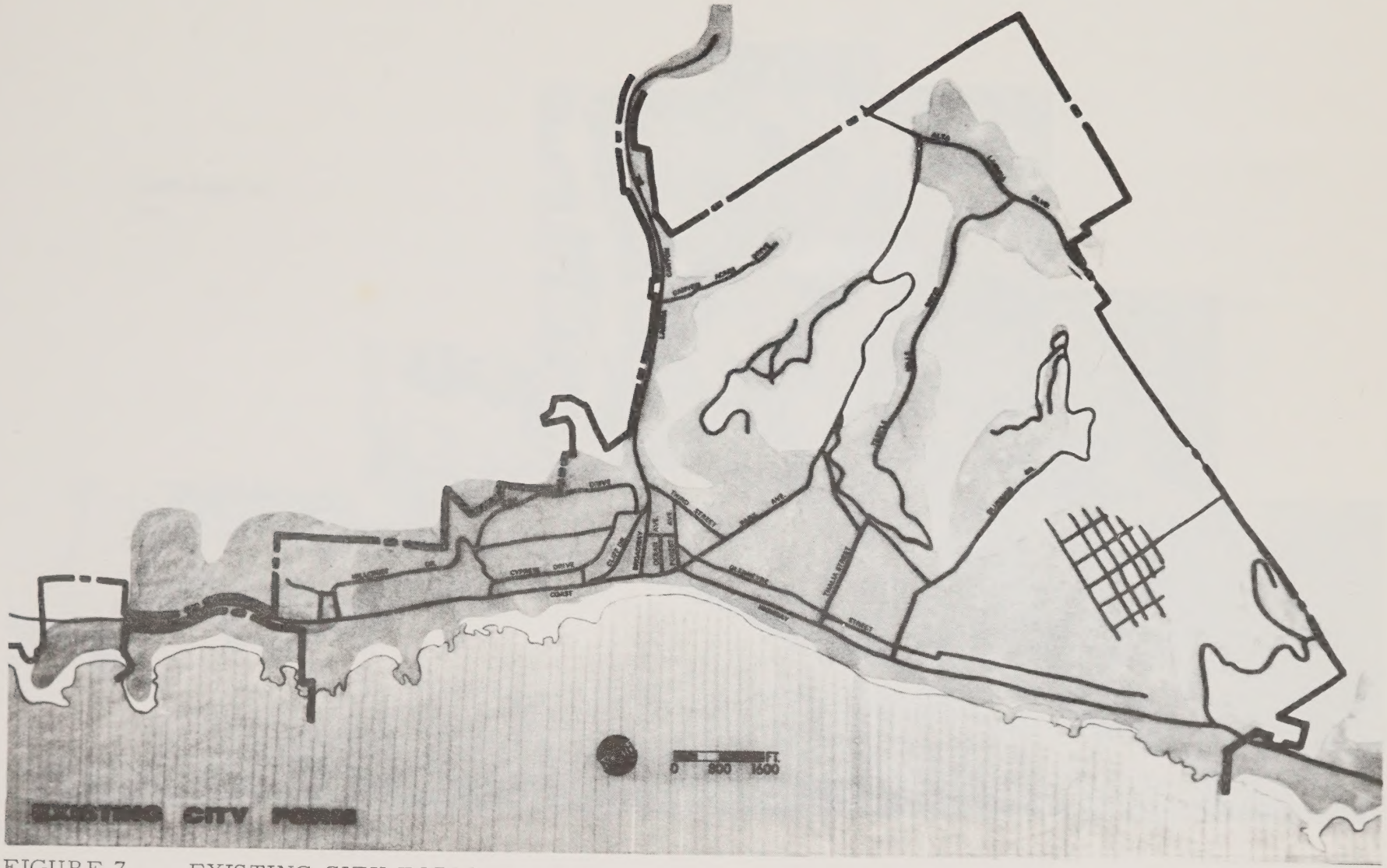

FIGURE 7. EXISTING CITY FORM

FIGURE 8. SLOPE ANALYSIS

FIGURE 9. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

IV. MULTIPLE CORE CONCEPT

1. Design Assumptions

- Maximum population - 20, 000
- Preservation of maximum hillside open space
- Preservation and continued development of detached single family units on hillsides
- Elimination of commercial strip development along Coast Highway
- Majority of residents to be housed in single family housing.

2. Functions

The multiple core concept proposes one major retail/office/entertainment core serving the combined needs of the resident and tourist populations, two subsidiary commercial cores which relate primarily to the immediately adjacent residential areas, and isolated sectors for cultural and civic centers as well as transient housing.

The major core area contains all main business functions, shops and offices (broker, real estate and bank), as well as main tourist attractions (theatres, specialty shops, art galleries).

Subsidiary core areas are composed of uses with a definite, non-tourist orientation. In addition to neighborhood commercial facilities, these areas contain community facilities such as small parks, playgrounds, and meeting rooms.

Medium density residential units surround the major core area and are meant primarily for use by the elderly and young marrieds. High density residential areas are located away from major circulation routes but within walking distance of core areas.

3. Urban Form

The distinction between the shelf and hills is reinforced through distribution of building volumes which complement and integrate their surroundings. Therefore, the detached units, which possess maximum flexibility of arrangement and adaptability to topography in the aggregate, are located on the hillsides and transitional areas. Several high density (low-rise and high-rise) residential complexes are located on the hillsides to maximize the availability of ocean views.

4. Transportation and Circulation Systems

a. Vehicular

The Coast Highway continues to be the major conveyor of both local and through traffic, but normal congestion has been alleviated because of the reduction in parking and turning maneuvers.

b. Pedestrian

The majority of the residents would still rely on the automobile for accessibility to shopping and recreation areas.

Unencumbered pedestrian movement is encouraged in the CBD

through provision of peripheral parking structures and internal pedestrian malls and city squares.

5. Housing Types and Densities

The majority of the housing stock would be single family detached units or high density complexes. Approximate housing allocation:

Low Density	4,600 D.U.
Medium Density	400 D.U.
High Density	3,000 D.U.

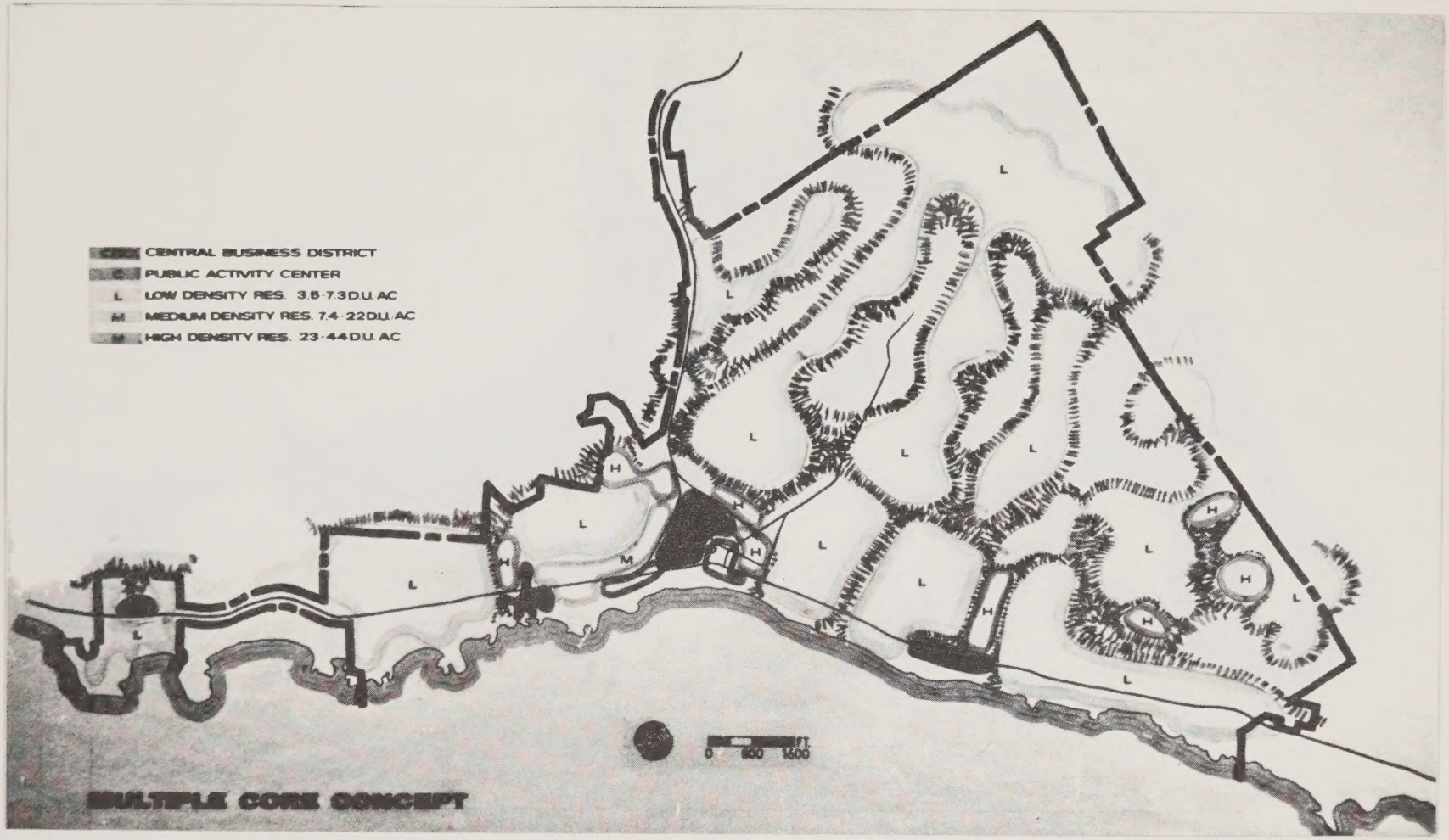
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
PUBLIC ACTIVITY CENTER
L LOW DENSITY RES. 3.6-7.3 D.U. AC
M MEDIUM DENSITY RES. 7.4-22 D.U. AC
H HIGH DENSITY RES. 23-44 D.U. AC
0 800 1600 FT.
MULTIPLE CORE CONCEPT

FIGURE 10. MULTIPLE CORE CONCEPT

FIGURE 11. MULTIPLE CORE

V. MULTIPLE VILLAGE CONCEPT

1. Design Assumptions

- Maximum population - 24,000
- Deemphasize CBD and redistribute commercial and civic facilities within each village center
- Create a wide range of housing types by varying location and configuration as well as housing densities
- Allow topography to determine city and housing forms
- Elimination of commercial strip development along the Coast Highway

2. Functions

The city becomes an aggregate of self contained communities (villages) - each focusing on a central community facilities area. The main characteristics of these villages are individualism, compactness of the commercial nucleus, and ease of pedestrian access from peripheral residential areas to the nucleus.

Each village nucleus would be developed to reflect the goals of participating residents, thereby attaining a physical and functional character distinct from the other villages. Some villages could be developed primarily for tourists and recreational uses.

Village character and form would also be developed to a great extent by the topography and surrounding features. To stimulate the greatest image of

village form, character and life style, each village is uniquely sited. Village form can be characterized generally as either shelf, hillside (transitional) or hilltop.

FIGURE 12. HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT

Commercial facilities presently located along the Coast Highway and the CBD would be relocated within village centers. The CBD therefore would become more of a professional office and cultural center village, with the widest range of housing accommodations to be found in any one village. The village core would be bound by medium density - row houses to the northwest and beyond that by high-income single

family homes. To the northeast, high density high-rise units could reinforce the transition between the shelf and mountain region and to the southeast, high-rise apartments define the edge of the core and the nebulous, single-family area which extends the length of the Coast Highway, from the core to the city limits and beyond.

3. Urban Form

The emphasis of this concept is on the clear distinction between the man-made and natural areas as well as differentiation between villages in terms of physical form and life style. Toward this end, some villages would consist of single-family homes and townhouses clustered around a commercial nucleus, while others would consist of hillside housing with integrated commercial and community facilities within the overall structure.

4. Transportation and Circulation System

a. Vehicular

The Coast Highway would continue to be the major conveyor of through traffic but local traffic, because of the redistribution of activity centers, would be removed to a great extent from the highway and instead is contained within each self-sufficient village. Because the emphasis within villages is on pedestrian accessibility, however, major vehicular paths would exist between village centers only.

b. Pedestrian

The interrelationship of functions within this concept is determined by ease of pedestrian accessibility. The structure of each

village, therefore, would be determined by comfortable walking distances. Ideally, this criterion would hold true for the relationship between residential and commercial areas, as well as within commercial areas only.

5. Housing Types and Densities

The majority of the housing in this concept is to be found within the low and high density ranges. The variety of individual housing units, however, would be the greatest in this concept because each density allowance can be found within areas which contain diverse topographic conditions. Approximate housing allocation:

Low Density	4,300 D.U.
Medium Density	300 D.U.
High Density	5,200 D.U.

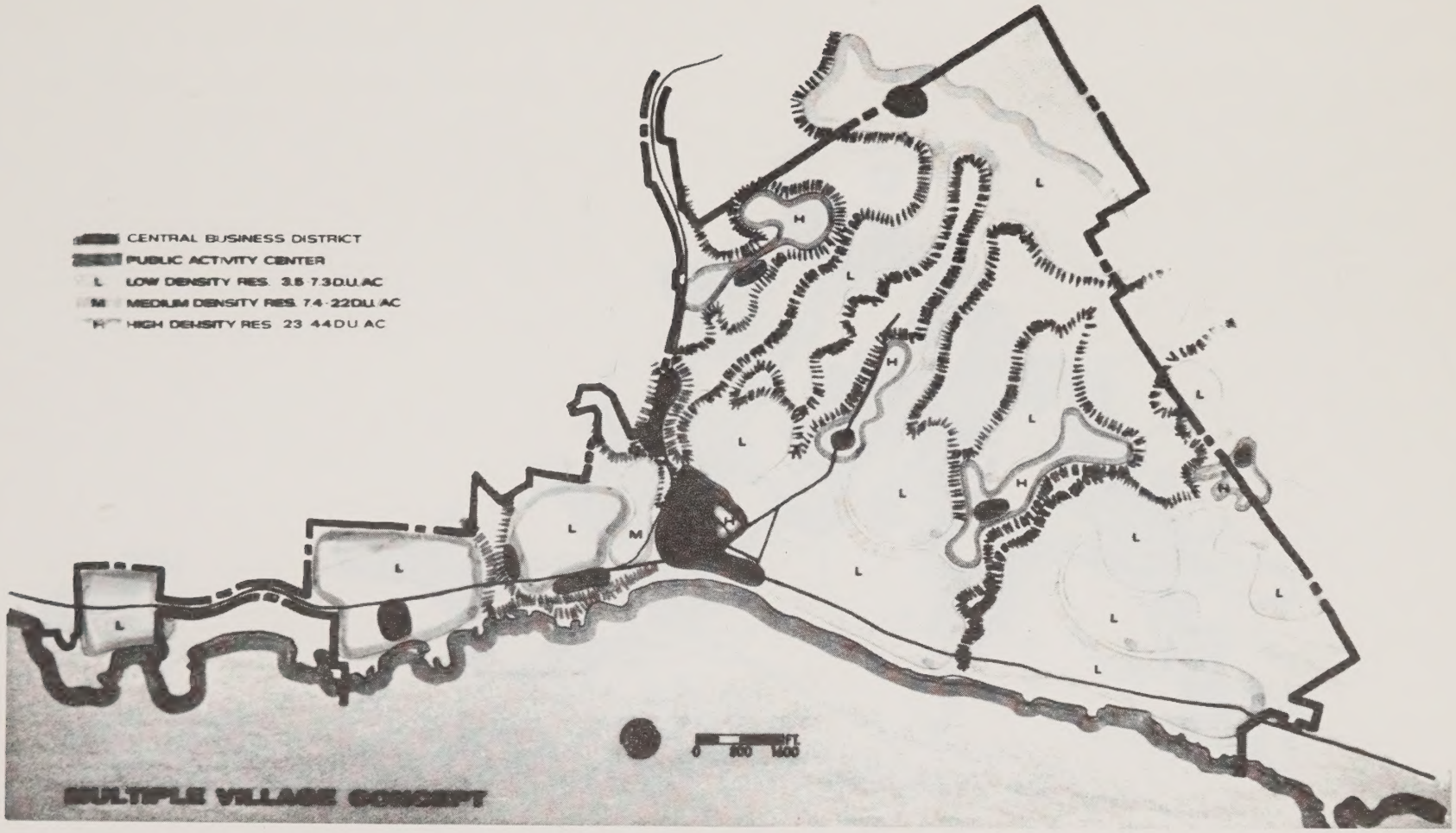
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
PUBLIC ACTIVITY CENTER
L LOW DENSITY RES. 3.5 7.3DU/AC
M MEDIUM DENSITY RES. 7.4 - 22DU/AC
H HIGH DENSITY RES. 23 44DU/AC
0 800 1600 FT
MULTIPLE VILLAGE CONCEPT

FIGURE 13. MULTIPLE VILLAGE CONCEPT

FIGURE 14. MULTIPLE VILLAGE

VI. LINEAR DISTRICT CONCEPT

1. Design Assumptions

- Maximum population - 18,000
- Curb single-family home development of hillsides and encourage mass landscaping of open areas
- Restructure strip-commercial character of the Coast Highway with minimum of disturbance to existing business concerns
- Introduce public transit along the Coast Highway

2. Functions

The primary suggestion put forth by this concept is the consolidation of strip commercial along the Coast Highway into more three-dimensional, pedestrian oriented shopping areas for both residents and tourists.

Each commercial area would be reinforced by an adjoining high density residential area, and both would serve as the nucleus for a larger low-density, single-family neighborhood. The unit structure is similar to that of a village with the exception that each unit functions in a linear fashion rather than radially because of the strong influence of the Coast Highway.

The two dimensional limits of each area would be defined by the foothills and the ocean on the northeast-southwest directions. Along the northwest-southeast axis (Pacific Coast Highway) each grouping is defined by linear parks which descend from the mountains to the sea.

3. Urban Form

This concept attempts to maximize the total length of interface between the man-made and natural areas by weaving lanscaped tentacles of open space between the urban islands. The resulting urban form is fragmented, no longer a monotonous monolith determined to envelop all available open space through sheer momentum.

4. Transportation and Circulation System

a. Vehicular

As part of the effort to relieve traffic congestion on the Coast Highway, the number of intersecting streets would be reduced to a minimum and no individual business curb cuts would be allowed. Each activity unit would have only two or three major access points to and from the Highway. These secondary arterials would in turn connect to a network of local streets which never intersect the Highway. This type of restricted access along the Coast Highway would be feasible because each activity area would emphasize a particular type of commercial or cultural facility, thereby establishing a "sense of place" - a reference point for the customer.

Motorists would no longer have to shuttle back and forth along Coast Highway in search of a particular shop or parking space. At most, the number of required parking stops would equal the number of activity centers (8) along the Highway.

A system of mini-bus shuttles between centers would further cut down on the traffic and parking maneuvers.

b. Pedestrian

Each shopping area along the Highway would provide sufficient concentrated parking space to accommodate long-term parking (several hours) and thereby encourage pedestrian movement between shopping and tourist attractions.

5. Housing Types and Densities

In order to intensify development along the Coast Highway in the manner discussed, each activity node would depend upon a sizeable residential base as well as transient tourists for business patronage. Further population growth or shifts would therefore be accommodated in high density housing immediately adjacent to the center of activity. Approximate housing allocation:

Low Density	4,100 D.U.
High Density	3,000 D.U.

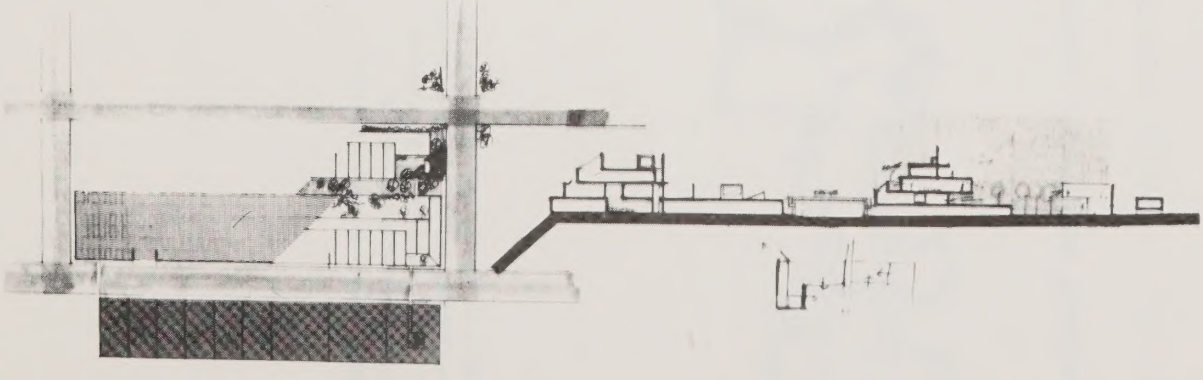

FIGURE 15. COAST HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT

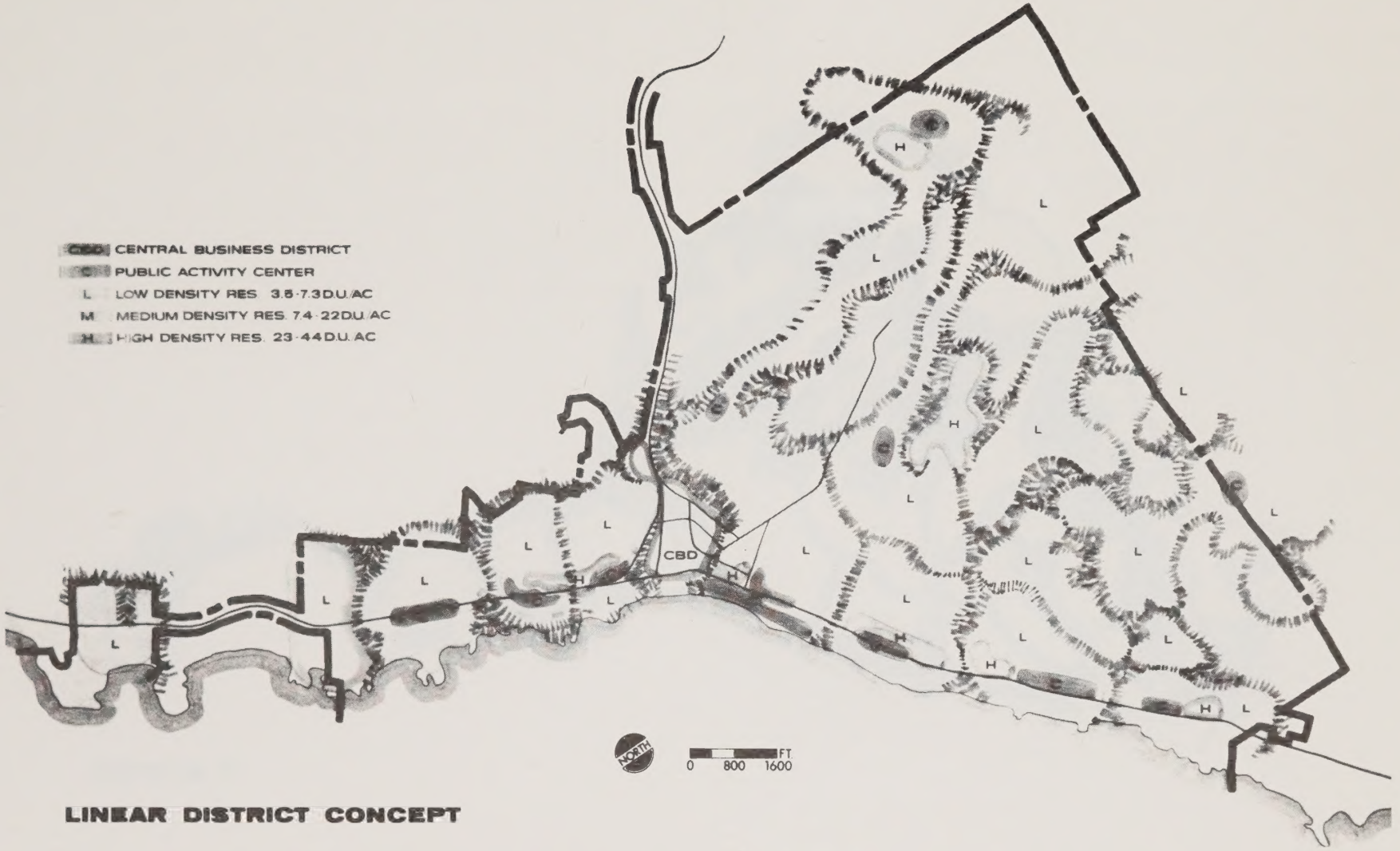

FIGURE 16. LINEAR DISTRICT CONCEPT

FIGURE 17. LINEAR

VII. HIGH DENSITY CONCEPT

1. Design Assumptions

- Maximum population - 32, 000
- Communal open space is socially more desirable and biologically more beneficial than isolated backyard green spaces
- Land use designations on a horizontal plane would no longer apply - a three dimensional mixed-use pattern will be encouraged

2. Functions

This concept is based on the premise that there is an ecologically desirable constant of open space per capita and that once an equilibrium has been reached between populated and natural areas of a region, further population growth should be accommodated in vertical housing structures. Their construction rate should keep pace not only with the population growth but with the population shift also, as dispersed single-family housing is vacated and the land is returned to its natural state. If no growth ceiling is determined and city boundaries are not expanded, then theoretically, this concept represents a constantly shrinking, horizontal projection of this man-made environment.

These man-made forms would be strongly delineated, yet complementary to their natural surroundings. Although their massing and extent would be monumental, there exists a potential for organic unity and beauty which

the present counterpart of graded hillsides and piloti (circular) supported boxes can never hope to attain. All such "megastructures" would contain service commercial and professional office uses as well as residential, educational and recreational facilities.

The former CBD would become an intense cultural/tourist activity center within this concept of development.

FIGURE 18. CANYON ENTRANCE

3. Urban Form

Whereas the Linear District Concept encourages development in the shelf area in an attempt to liberate the hillsides, this concept emphasizes the development of areas of topographical transition. Megastructures, which are in effect vertical "villages," are intended to boldly define the otherwise fluid interface between shelf and hillside regions; to respond to difficult topography which is barren and cannot be utilized for

active recreation; and in effect to underscore the functional and textural difference between natural and man-made environments.

This almost exclusively high-density city form is the result of a respectful, technological response to the constraints imposed on building by existing land forms.

4. Transportation and Circulation System

a. Vehicular

The Coast Highway would be utilized primarily by through traffic, and local traffic destined for the CBD. Most inter-megastructure circulation would occur on a new network of connecting roads or in some cases an aerial tramway system spanning between hilltops.

b. Pedestrian

Pedestrian circulation of a purposeful nature would be contained almost exclusively within the megastructures and consist of both horizontal paths and vertical movement systems.

5. Housing Types and Densities

Although the concept is one of overall high density living, in actuality a range of densities (30-60 D.U./A.C.) would exist within each mega-structure. This would depend on the actual configuration of each structure (i.e. contour rise vs high-rise). Two areas of existing high income, single-family housing will be preserved. The approximate housing allocation:

Low Density	600 D.U.
High Density	12,300 D.U.

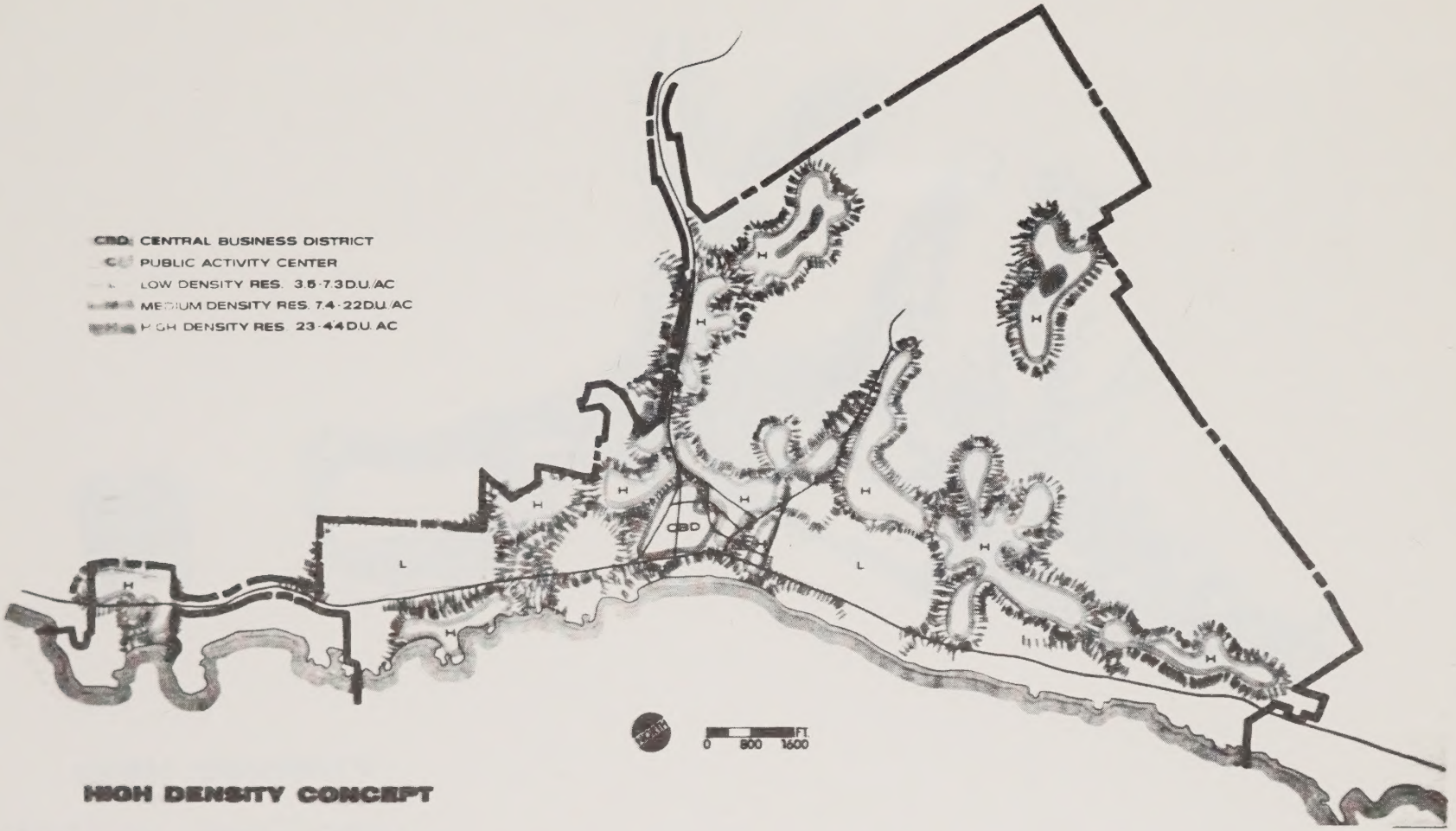

FIGURE 19. HIGH DENSITY CONCEPT

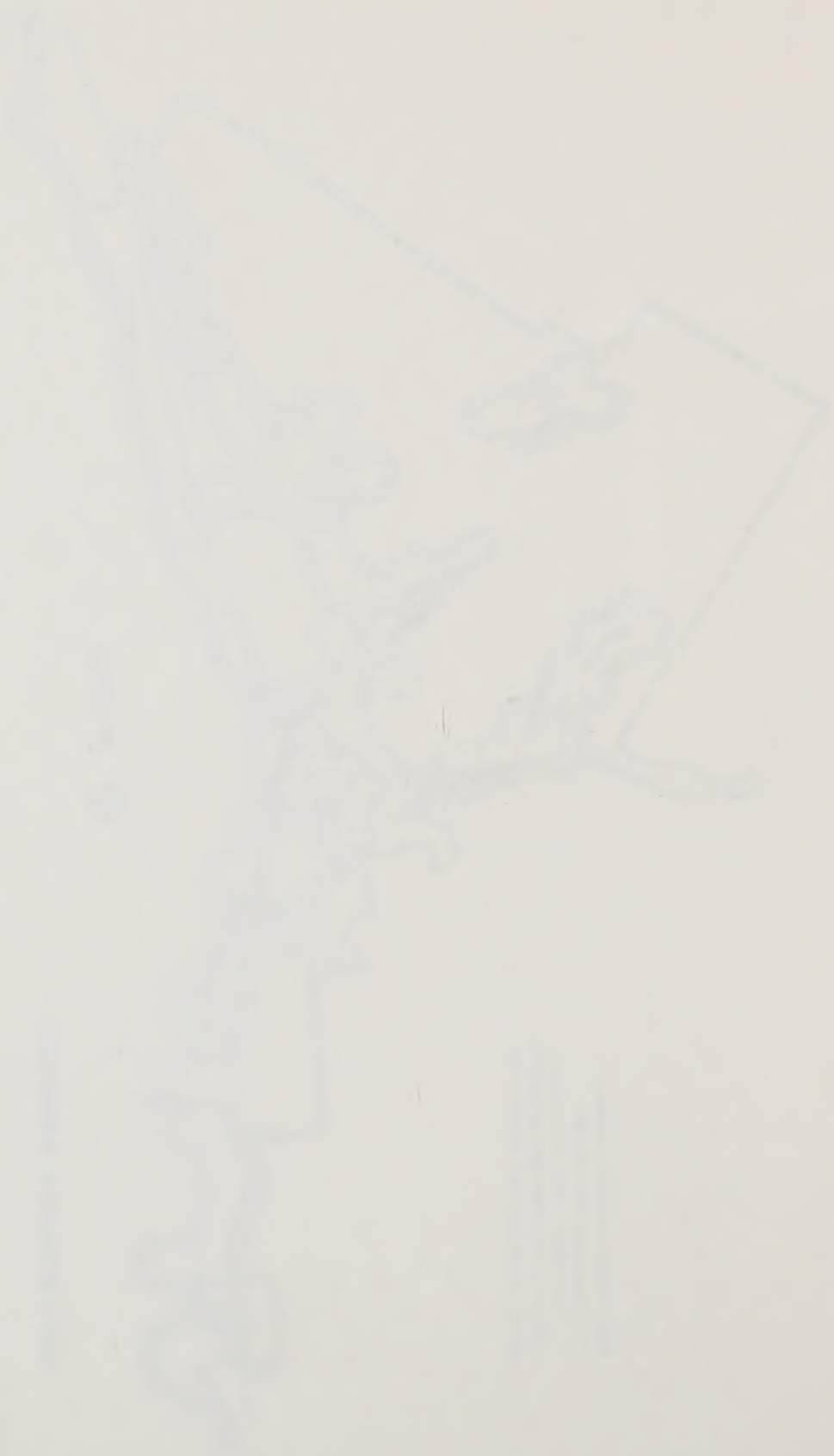

FIGURE 20. HIGH DENSITY

VIII. BOLD CONCEPT

1. Design Assumptions

- Maximum population - 22,000
- The Coast Highway and accompanying structures act as a physical and psychological barrier which could be eliminated
- The shelf area would relate directly to the coast on a pedestrian scale of movement
- Easy beach access would be provided to the maximum feasible number of housing units

2. Functions

As with the High Density Concept, a major functional restructuring of the City would be required to accomplish the goal of this concept: the reunion, both physical and psychological, of the inhabitants of Laguna Beach with their coast and beaches.

To accomplish this goal, the Pacific Coast Highway would be rerouted to the northeast, following a path which approximates the boundary between the shelf plane and the hills. The vacated right-of-way becomes a linear park which parallels the ocean, periodically extending small green tentacles into the adjacent residential neighborhoods. At the mouth of Laguna Canyon, it merges with the Ocean Park on the bluffs and the extensively landscaped, pedestrian network of the CBD.

In the resulting coast environment, internal vehicular circulation is minimized and ease of pedestrian circulation becomes the prime goal as well as determinant of functional relationships.

The CBD could truly become the core of the city - concentrating all business, commercial, civic, cultural and tourist activity within a pedestrian oriented environment. It would be physically related to the coast and ocean views. This concept is based upon the assumption that a successful urban environment is dependent on ease of social interaction.

3. Urban Form

All public uses and the majority of all housing units would be contained within the boundaries of the shelf land area. Laguna Beach, in effect, would become a 2, 000-foot wide Linear City.

The hillsides would revert to public open space, for the most part. Some areas would be reserved for high income, low-density housing.

4. Transportation and Circulation System

Vehicular and pedestrian circulation would operate basically at 90 degrees to each other. Vehicular circulation would occur primarily parallel to the coast line and pedestrian paths would be oriented perpendicular to the coast. These act as "people collectors" and would function as channels to the ocean and beach front recreation areas.

For local vehicular traffic, a system of elongated loop roads would branch off the Highway to serve residential areas. These loops are not interconnected, but relate directly to the Highway.

FIGURE 21. BOLD CONCEPT STREET STUDY

5. Housing Types and Densities

This concept stresses close proximity of areas of various housing densities. Designated areas, of any one particular density, are therefore smaller in this concept and arranged in a checkerboard fashion to allow a maximum housing-type mix. Approximate housing allocation:

Low Density	2,800 D.U.
Medium Density	700 D. U.
High Density	5,100 D. U.

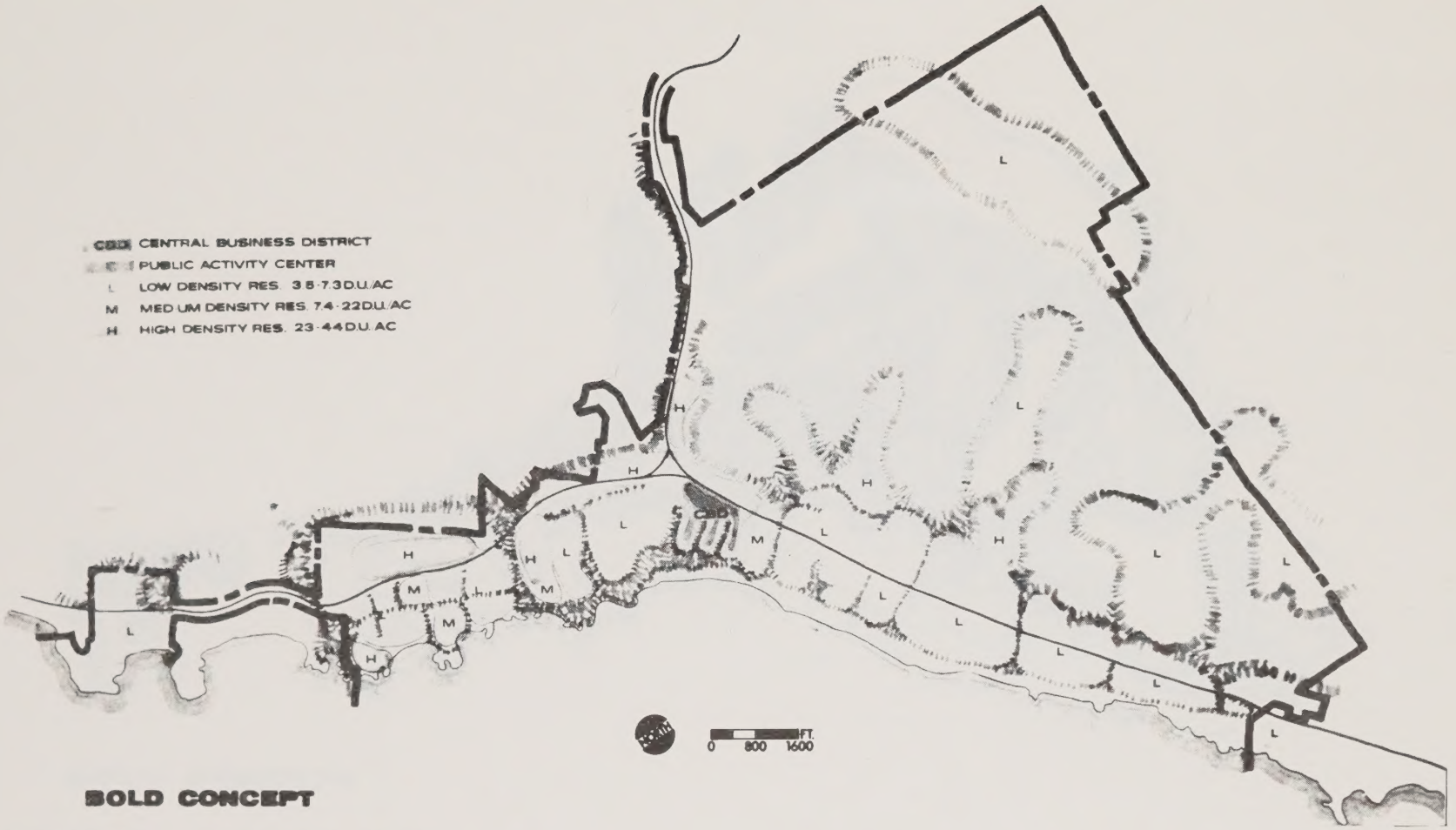
CBD CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
PUBLIC ACTIVITY CENTER
L LOW DENSITY RES. 3.5-7.3D.U./AC
M MEDIUM DENSITY RES. 7.4-22D.U./AC
H HIGH DENSITY RES. 23-44D.U./AC
0 800 1600 FT.
BOLD CONCEPT

FIGURE 22. BOLD CONCEPT

FIGURE 23. BOLD CONCEPT

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